THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

[ESTABLISHED 1840.]

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."—I JOHN 5: 2-3.

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IN THE LINEAGE OF THE GODS.

BY DR. JAMES E. TALMAGE, F.R.S.E., ETC.

NOTE.—The following article has been written by request for translation into and publication in Japanese, as the first of a series of tracts intended for use in the mission field of Japan. It is presented here in deference to suggestions that it may prove of interest to our English readers. Many of the people of Japan possess no well defined belief as to the immortality of the soul, nor have they any definite doctrine touching the relationship between man and Deity, though certain precepts of Buddhism point to a state of existence after the death of the body; and the tenets of Shintoism include, though in somewhat shadowy outline, the doctrine of the divine ancestry of man. The reference notes in connection with the article are for English readers, and do not appear in the Japanese version.

The present age in human history is one of rapid growth, wide expansion, and far-reaching development, not alone in the material affairs of life, but likewise in the thoughts and aspirations of mind and soul. While among the multitudes of men some care for naught beyond the pleasure and profit of the passing present, there are many whose thoughts turn to the past, and whose aspirations point to a future full of promise.

Among the questions arising, ofttimes spontaneously and unbidden, in the mind of the thoughtful man, are many concerning himself. He is conscious of his individual existence as one of a host of his kind. Reason tells him that his fellows and he did not come into being by chance, but in accordance with natural law. In his moments of quiet meditation and deep reflection,

he finds himself wondering and perchance enquiring, as to his condition in the past, the relation of that past to the present state, and the connection between the present and the unexplored future.

He asks: What and who am I? Whence and for what purpose came I hither? Whither shall I go when death claims me?

Let us briefly consider these questions in their order.

1. *Who and what is man?*

Students of science have long debated as to whether man is an animal and nothing more, or a being differing essentially from the animals in origin and in destiny. The man who thinks for himself feels that he is not of the brute creation; he knows that he is distinct from and superior to the beast and the bird, the reptile and the fish, the insect and the worm; that indeed he stands above all so-called animal forms of life. As the sky is above the earth, so is man superior to them in intellectual power, in spiritual aspiration, and in his marvelous achievements resulting therefrom.

True, he is not as strong as the elephant or the horse; but his superior mind has enabled him to subdue them both, and compel them to his service. He is not as fleet as the deer, nor can he pursue the wild fowl in their fashion of flight to the upper deep; but he knows how to make a gun and prepare its ammunition; and with these he calls to the stag as it bounds, to the bird in its flight—he commands them to stop and they obey him. He cannot swim from continent to continent as may certain tenants of the briny waste, but he has built floating palaces equipped with locomotive power to defy the course of wind and tide; and with these he traverses amidst comfort and luxury the no longer trackless ocean.

Man surpasses the animals, not in a greater development of their special powers, but in the superior endowments of his higher nature: and by these he maintains dominion over them.

In achievements of a kind never attempted by beast or bird, is his greatness affirmed. Consider the marvels of man's inventions, and his power of applying truths when discovered. By the telephone he transmits the very tone of his voice and is heard hundreds of miles away. His telegraphic message flashes between continents, though oceans roll and roar between. Without wires he speaks to his fellows from shore to mid-ocean; battle-ships are in communication though each be hidden below the other's horizon; the admiral launches his commands into space, and he is understood and obeyed, though invisible through distance.

Man with his railways and his ships, his machinery and his mills, his newspapers and his books, his cities and his laws!—he is a marvelous animal indeed, if animal he be. But in many respects other than those mentioned above is his superiority made plain. He is endowed with the capacity of unlimited advancement and perpetual improvement. The nest of the bird is practically of the same pattern for every generation of the species; the beasts of the forest live as they have lived during the centuries that have gone. Man has learned to improve his home, to better his surroundings, to utilize the forces of nature, in short to advance and develop. He is endowed with the faculty of abstract thought, he seeks to learn of by-gone times and ponders the possibilities of years to come. He conceives ideals of action and hope,

and considers himself as child of the past and as father of the future of his race. He is conscious of the desire to worship; he is capable of spiritual aspirations, his soul yearns toward heaven.

What then is man?—A being of growing intelligence and unlimited capacity of development—a being who has gained dominion over the beasts of the land, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea. He possesses a body which in chemical composition, and to some extent in parts and structure is closely akin to the bodies of certain of the higher animals; but let this great truth be kept in mind—*the body is not the whole man.*

It is indeed the garment in which the undying spirit is clothed—a fit garb for the appointed sojourn in this inclement world. We know that the mind, the spirit, may be active while the body sleeps. In every man there dwells an immortal something—a something that existed before the body was framed, that shall live after the body has gone to decay.

And this thought brings us to the second part of our first question—*Who is man?* In accordance with the universal law of life, every living thing is the descendant of ancestors of the same kind, and the species of life are perpetuated each after its kind. If man be essentially an immortal spirit, though clothed for a time in a mortal body, his spirit must be of immortal parentage. Man is in very truth the child of God; his spirit is literally the offspring of Deity.

True it is that mortal man appears too weak and imperfect to claim descent through such a lineage; but does he not possess the power of eternal progression? The immediate offspring of the most gorgeous butterfly that ever sipped the nectar from the flower-cup is a crawling caterpillar. But in due time the larval worm passes into the corpse-like chrysalis; its sleep resembles death; then, finally, it awakens and emerges from its pupa-shell, a winged image like unto its glorious parent.

If this period of man's mortality be the larval stage of his career, the later and higher possibilities await him. If he belong not to the animal kingdom, to which kingdom does he belong? I answer you: to the kingdom of God. Who then is man? The son of his Eternal Father, the child of Deity, the offspring of the Almighty.

2. *Whence and for what purpose came man hither?*

From the abode of his Heavenly Ancestor, man's spirit came to earth. The assumption that the individual was first brought into existence at the time of mortal birth is illogical, unphilosophical, untrue. This life is but one epoch in the career of the human child of God—a period in his existence separating the eternities that have gone before from the eternities that are to come. A veil of forgetfulness has fallen between us and the past, effectively hiding from view and shutting out from recollection the scenes of our primeval childhood, even as another veil hangs between us and the hereafter. Sometimes, perhaps as the hour of death approaches, a glimpse of the glorious future is permitted, even before the spirit has left its mortal tenement; so too at times, in blessed moments of sacred communion and holy thought, half memories of the past steal into our souls. As a European writer has declared, he seems to hear and feel the melody of songs which once he sang, but for which now he cannot find neither words nor music fit.

Among the characteristic features of Buddhism is the recognition of the law of cause and effect. Practically all religious sects proclaim the doctrine that the future state of the soul, whether of happiness or of misery, will be the result of this earthly life. Buddha rightly taught in addition to this solemn truth, that this life is similarly determined by causes operating in the past. Those spirits who in their state of primeval existence attained to the requisite condition of worthiness have taken earthly bodies, and thus clothed have entered the school of mortality. Herein they are tested and proved; here they learn lessons and gain experience not elsewhere obtainable; here may they acquire strength through trials, fortitude through suffering, patience through vicissitude, wisdom through disappointment and failure. Only by these experiences can we advance to higher states; and as a prophet of olden time has told, so highly did we esteem the privilege of taking mortal bodies that in our spirit state we sang together and shouted for joy in happy anticipation.

Whence came man hither? From the abode of his Almighty Father, from the home of his primeval childhood, from the realm of the spirit-children of God, to which royal family he belongs. And why came he hither? To learn the lessons that are taught in the university of earth; to imbibe that knowledge and win that wisdom without which his future advancement would be hindered or prevented; to be able to choose for himself between evil and good; to be free to act without compulsion or restraint, and then to meet the consequences of his choice.

3. *After death, what?*

Belief in a conscious individual existence beyond the grave is not confined to the Christian world; rather is it an intuitive conception, practically common to the human family, civilized and otherwise. Human reason and common sense suggest again the law of cause and effect as to the relation between this life and the future state, and Buddhistic precepts emphasize the application. Death does not destroy; it is no mere accident; not in and of itself a calamity; not contrary to nature, but as truly natural as is birth. It is the return of the spirit—the going home after the journey of life. Our satisfaction and happiness there, the welcome we may expect, the glory or the shame awaiting us, are all dependent upon the life we have led, the deeds we have done or left undone. There is no chance, no inconsistency, no personal favor or prejudice to be expected or feared as to individual destiny; every soul will find its place according to its purity and worthiness. Worldly rank will not avail; the wealth of earth will be left behind; the humble man and poor, if of pure heart and blameless life, will be exalted above the titled nobleman whose career has been one of sin. So too, the millionaire and the prince who have led lives of honor will find their place among the true nobility of heaven.

What then, lies beyond the portal of the grave? Eternity with its harvest of good or evil from the seed sown on earth—peace for the righteous, who will continue in good works as the accepted and worthy children of God; remorse with its anguish for the wicked, whose lives have been wasted in evil deeds; eternity with its boundless possibilities of advancement and development, worlds without end.

By way of summary and inference:—

We hold that man is literally the child of the Eternal Father, that he is truly of the lineage of the Gods; that, therefore, he is immortal; and though the body may die, the spirit still lives and again shall be united with the body. We affirm that man existed as an intelligent being prior to his earthly birth, and that he lives beyond the grave.

We believe that he is responsible for his own acts, and that these shall produce their natural results of happiness or suffering, as truly as seed that is sown brings forth good grain or noxious weeds according to its kind.

We believe that man may advance in righteousness and become more nearly perfect; even as the followers of Buddha teach that by the "*Holy Path*," or by the "*Pure Path*"* men may walk in the light and become Buddha. We believe even as do you my beloved readers in Japan, that some will follow the path of *Hinayana*, and others the higher road of *Mahayana*,† each choosing for himself according to inclination and capacity; and, sad to say, yet others use that God-given freedom of choice and follow the path of sin that leadeth downward to perdition.

Furthermore, you teach that Buddha was man, and that by eschewing evil and choosing good, by self-sacrifice and righteous deeds, by purity of thought and act, by doing good to others and seeking after God, he has risen to exalted rank. We hold that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, has lived the life of a man among men, and has trodden the *Holy Path* and the *Pure Path* that led to the celestial throne.

You who cherish the ancient Shinto faith claim descent from divine parentage. My brothers of *Shinto*, or *Kami-no-Michi*, you profess to follow the "Way of the Gods" as your name declares. Your holy *Kami* were the creators of the heavens and the earth, the sea and all things that in them are. We hold that the Godhead is a Trinity comprising the Eternal Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that by the power of the Godhead were the worlds made; and that man is the child of Deity.

Shintoism enjoins toleration of the beliefs of others, freedom of thought and action; love for fellow men, kindness toward all. We profess that without these virtues we cannot please God; that if we love not our brother we cannot truthfully say we love God; that we must live in virtue and chastity, sobriety and honesty, and obey the law made plain by the Lord Jesus Christ, if we would finally reach the abode of the blessed in the house of our Father.

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* The distinction between the course of life described as the "*Pure Path*" and that known as the "*Holy Path*" is essentially the same as that between *Hinayana* and *Mahayana* stated in note two.

† While the so-called doctrines of *Hinayana* and *Mahayana*, as expounded by their respective adherents, are described as distinct in a multitude of details, one of the essential differences appears to be this: Hinayana represents the simpler phases of the law as taught by Buddha; while Mahayana embodies the higher teachings and stricter requirements. Hinayana is the lesser law, according to which mortals may attain a certain degree of exaltation through strict compliance with the requirements; they live under the law, and do or refrain from doing because so commanded. Mahayana is the embodiment of a higher order of life, by strict devotion to which man may imbibe the spirit of the law, making such a part of his being, so that he naturally lives in harmony with the

law. He does good and refrains from evil, not because he is commanded so to do, but in accordance with natural inclinations. The law to him is a dead letter, because he lives above it yet never violates its requirements. According to Buddhistic teachings, the faithful follower of Mahayana may himself become a Buddha—the incarnation of all that is good.

The distinction thus made is significant and impressive. Better to live by Hinayana—in obedience to the stern commands "*Thou shalt*" and "*Thou shalt not*"—better to do good through hope of reward and eschew evil through fear of punishment, than to do evil and reject good. But better still, far better is it, to imbibe the spirit of righteous law—to walk by Mahayana—to make right living the natural mode of life, to advance in good works until we enjoy freedom in keeping the commandments of God, through natural inclination and love rather than because of the law's demands.

"TIME, TIMES, AND A HALF."

A CORRESPONDENT asks for an explanation of the expression, "Time and times and the dividing of time," in Daniel vii: 25, and a similar expression in chapter xii: 7.

Among commentators it is quite generally held, on what appears to be sufficient grounds, that the expression stands for a period of 1260 years. In the seventh chapter the prophet sees in a vision four world powers, represented under the forms of four great beasts, arising out of the commotion of the sea, or the nations of the earth. The last of these powers is divided into ten, represented by ten horns, and three of these are subdued by "a little horn"—a tyrannical power that is said to "speak great words against the Most High" and "wear out the Saints of the Most High," for the period mentioned, or for 1260 years, when comes the triumph of the Saints. In the twelfth chapter, interwoven with the history of secular empires, are found predictions of the persecution of "the holy people" that also was to last for 1260 years, or "time, times, and a half."

So far, commentators are agreed, but the difficulty is to determine on what precise date this period of 1260 years, which has also been called the reign of anti-Christ, commenced. This can be said, though, that the best calculations point to some time of the first part of the last century as the end of that dark period and the beginning of the deliverance of the "Saints of the Most High." This is noteworthy, since that was the time during which the Lord raised up the Prophet Joseph and laid the foundation of the Church in this dispensation. Habershon, for instance, suggests that the period of 1260 years came to an end in the years 1843 or 1844. Another view represents that end as having occurred in the year 1822. Both these dates are epochs in the history of the people of God. In the year last mentioned, the youthful Prophet of the Lord was being prepared, under divine tuition, for the reception of the marvelous revelations that formed a beginning of the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in this age and generation. About the first mentioned date, the life work of the Prophet was about to be concluded, and the Church of Christ was preparing for the exodus that preceded its establishment in the valleys of the mountains, from which position its light has gone forth to the uttermost ends of the world.

We are not of those who would discourage the diligent study of the difficult writings of the ancient prophets, though the facts and dates they have recorded often are beyond the calculation of human wisdom. On the contrary, we believe that the prayerful study of these writings will result in both spiritual and intellectual benefit. But it should always be remembered that it is more important to grasp the moral lessons conveyed in those writings, than to fathom the mysteries. The great lesson conveyed in this book is this, that the political concerns of this world, the rise and fall of empires, the changes and revolutions in states and kingdoms, are all known and taken cognizance of by the Almighty Ruler of the universe. As Prideaux has very well observed, when we read the pages of history or look around upon passing events, we see much that is almost too painful to behold; but when we study the sure word of prophecy, then, like the Psalmist, we enter into the sanctuary of our God and understand, to some extent, what the outcome is sure to be. Then, without inquiring into the minute questions of details, we are led to admire the general results of the glorious plan. We are led to place less reliance on human calculations and conjectures, and to look forward to the glorious day when all the redeemed shall sing in chorus, "Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

The Book of Daniel was written during the captivity in Babylon, perhaps the most terrible experience in the existence of the ancient chosen people, and yet it contains some of the grandest revelations concerning the future of that people, and the human race. Everywhere in that book the providence of the Almighty is seen overruling the evil plans for the good of the people. Such are some of the moral lessons contained in this ancient document, and they will always be among the most precious inheritances of the people of God.—*Deseret News.*

The Catacombs of Rome.—The Catacombs of Rome are to be found on almost all the roads leading out of the city at a distance of two or three miles outside the walls, wherever the nature of the soil allowed of their being made. The soil is of volcanic origin, too soft to be used for building purposes, yet of sufficient consistency to admit of a considerable amount of excavations without the necessity for supports or substruction of any kind. More than forty of these cemeteries are known to have existed, and two-thirds of these were of considerable extent. The most celebrated are the work of the early Christians. They consist of a labyrinth of narrow galleries from four to five feet wide at different levels. In each wall berth-like recesses contained the bodies of the dead. The entrances to these were closed with slabs of stone, carefully sealed, and marked with inscriptions or rude pictures. In some cases small rooms, called cubicula, were set apart for families of distinction in the Church, especially for martyrs. The original ideas of their construction was evidently that they should be used as burial vaults. The Roman laws gave protection to the burial places of the dead. When persecution arose, the Christians began to meet in the Catacombs for worship, and some took refuge there from persecution. This led to decrees, at different times, forbidding the assembling in the cemeteries. The length of the galleries in the Roman Catacombs has been variously estimated at from three hundred and fifty miles upward.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, JULY 27, 1905.

EDITORIAL.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SAXON CHIEF.

ABOUT the year 600 A.D., Roman missionaries brought their Christianity to the Saxons of Great Britain. Taine, in his "History of English Literature," says: "A high priest of the Northumbrians declared in the presence of the nobles that the old gods were powerless, and confessed that formerly 'he knew nothing of that which he adored.'"

In the discussion which followed in this council of chiefs, one of them arose in the assembly and said:

"You remember, it may be, O king, that which sometimes happens in winter when you are seated at table with your earls and thanes. Your fire is lighted, and your hall warmed, and without is rain and snow and storm. Then comes a swallow flying across the hall; he enters by one door, and leaves by another. The brief moment while he is within is pleasant to him; he feels not rain nor cheerless winter weather; but the moment is brief—the bird flies away in the twinkling of an eye, and he passes from winter to winter. Such, methinks, is the life of man on earth, compared with the uncertain time beyond. It appears for a while; but what is the time which comes after—the time which was before? We know not. If, then, this new doctrine may teach us somewhat of greater certainty, it were well that we should regard it."

The figure which the Saxon chief used in expressing his views of mortal life was indeed apt and forceful. The past was a blank to him, as was also that which lay beyond the grave. He had learned that his heathen gods had no power, and that his mythology gave him no satisfactory or rational answers to the problems of life; and so he was willing to listen to the Roman missionaries who came with their chants and their robes and their crucifix in hopes that they might give him something better than that which he had.

We are certain that what the Romans brought to the Saxons was not the pure doctrine of the Gospel of Christ. Yet, there was, no doubt, some truth in their teachings, and they were an improvement on the heathenism of the past. It is readily seen what it was that the chief yearned to know by his question: "What is the time which comes after—the time which was before?" From out the darkness the swallow came, and into the darkness it went. The

dim light which the king and his company had within did not penetrate the darkness on either side.

The chief's question is very much the problem of to-day, as it has been that of all times. No satisfactory estimate can be had of the present life without some understanding of that which was before and that which will follow. No truth can stand absolutely isolated. There is an intimate connection between all things past, present, and future. No true line can be drawn without three points, and in the consideration of the great problems of life, these points are the past, the present, and the future. Where did man come from? What is the object of this earth life? What is his destiny?—these are the great questions, and without some light on them man is adrift on a dark ocean of uncertainty and doubt.

Ask the average Christian of the day what knowledge he has of these three vital questions, and what do we find? The past is a blank—he knows nothing of the pre-existent state. He will tell you, if he is pressed for an expression of his views, that, as far as he knows, the birth of the mortal body was also the beginning of the immortal "soul." The present he may claim with more assurance, is plain to him—a fleeting, sinful, temporary existence made so by the mistakes of our first parents in the Garden of Eden—a probation, however, in which he may obtain salvation, and thus be prepared for the future life in heaven; but where and what heaven is, and the nature of the life which will there be lived is purely a matter of uncertain speculation. Thus the average Christian of to-day, not having clearly in view the three guiding points, can have no definite conception of the simple, yet sublime "scheme of things" which extends as an endless chain from the eternity of the past to the eternity of the future. Life is a "chaotic assembly of colors" to one who does not look at it from the proper point of view; but to the one who does, it becomes a wonderful masterpiece of art. And so far as any real, soul-satisfying knowledge of the meaning of life is concerned, the Christian of to-day is very nearly as poor as the Saxon chief, who saw in life only a brief sojourn amid the light and warmth and cheer of a banquet hall, while without, where they all came from and all had to go was darkness and cold and storm.

The Britains of to-day might do well to learn a lesson from the chief of olden time. To-day, as for centuries past, they have been groping in spiritual darkness, not knowing from whence they came to this earth, not knowing why they are here, not knowing to what they might attain in the worlds to come. True they have received a glimmer of the light which has come to them through the ages from the time when the Lord and His Apostles were on the earth; but a glimpse is all it has been. The Britains of to-day are in sore need of more light—they need to get out from their dimly lighted huts into the bright, warm sunshine which streams down from heaven.

And it *is* streaming down from heaven—God has spoken again to men in our day—angels have come with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and have taught it to men. The past has been explained, the future has been revealed, and therefore the present may be understood. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is on the earth, and the message of the restored Gospel is being preached to the world. Its doctrines will teach the British people as it will all others "somewhat of greater certainty," and therefore, "it were well

that they should regard it." Thousands in the past have regarded it and have received of its glorious light. Many are now hearing of it, but as "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way" that leads to eternal life, "few there be that find it." Yet the hearts of all who have found the light go out to those who are yet in the dark, and the Saints are ever inviting all such to come and rejoice with them in the restored Gospel of the Lord.

N. A.

If any of the Elders has a photograph of Apostle Charles W. Penrose, we should like the immediate loan of it for a few days at this office.

Release.—Elder Arthur C. Chadwick of the Grimsby conference is honorably released to return home per s.s. *Republic*, July 28, 1905.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Baptisms at Nottingham.—Early Sunday morning July, 9th, 1905, two more young men full of life and energy were made bonafide citizens of the kingdom of God by complying with the ordinance of baptism in the waters of the river Trent. Elder Levi J. Hawkley officiated.

Celebrated the Twenty-fourth of July.—We are indebted to Elder James W. R. Hurst for the following:

"On the afternoon of Saturday, July 22nd, 1905, the Saints of the Manchester conference and their friends assembled in a field in the beautiful little village of Worsley, near Manchester, and celebrated the anniversary of the day when the 'Mormon Pioneers' first entered the Salt Lake Valley, July 24th, 1847. We all assembled in one corner of the field under the shade of the trees and listened to an interesting program of songs, recitations, and speeches. After this we all repaired to the village 'tavern' and thoroughly relished a wholesome 'tea.'

"We then returned to the field and spent the remainder of the day participating in field sports, races, tug of war, skipping contests, playing ball, etc., for which suitable prizes were given.

"In the midst of the fun it suddenly commenced to rain very hard. We all rushed under a large oak tree, raised our umbrellas and sang the song 'Love at Home'—and just let it rain.

"Including Elders, Saints, and friends, there were over one hundred people assembled, and all thoroughly enjoyed themselves. An excellent feeling prevailed. It was an agreeable change for all to get out in the fresh air, away from the work in the cities, and afforded the Saints and friends a splendid opportunity of meeting each other, and becoming better acquainted."

District Meetings.—Successful district meetings were held on July 16th, 1905, in the Ipswich branch of the Norwich conference, and also one at Nuneaton, Birmingham conference. The meetings in the latter city were specially well attended by strangers, and many had to stand in the doorway and even in the street. It is believed that these meetings were the first held in Nuneaton by the Latter-day Saints for over forty years.

A very successful district meeting was held at Watford, London conference, on Sunday, July 16th, 1905, at the Co-operative Hall, Watford.

The morning session was devoted to sustaining the Church authorities and to reporting by the local officers of the progress of the branch. President Heber J. Grant addressed the Saints, relating many interesting incidents in his life. He exhorted all to be obedient to the law of tithing.

The afternoon and evening meetings brought many strangers. President Grant spoke at both meetings with great power, bearing a strong testimony to the divinity of the latter-day work, which resulted in many of the visitors staying after the meetings for conversations.

The singing rendered during each service by Sisters Arvilla Clark, Grace Tout, Elders Willard Andelin and Edwin F. Tout, was highly appreciated by both visitors and Saints.

A district meeting of the North London, South London, and Stratford branches was held in the Finsbury Town Hall, on Sunday, July 23rd, 1905, President Jesse W. Hoopes presiding. The hall was filled with Saints and friends, and a most enjoyable time was had. President Heber J. Grant was present and occupied part of the time in bearing a strong testimony to the truth of the Gospel. During the meeting solos were sung by Elder Willard Andelin and Sister Maggie Tout.

CONFERENCE APPOINTMENTS.

Grimsby	Sunday, September 24, 1905.		
Manchester	„	October 1,	„
London	„	„ 8,	„
Sheffield	„	„ 15,	„
Nottingham	„	„ 22,	„
Leeds	„	„ 29,	„

PERSONALITY AFTER THE RESURRECTION.

AN ARGUMENT FROM THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST TO PROVE A CONSTANT PERSONALITY.

THE resurrection of Jesus is a revelation of the persistence of personality. All the narratives of the appearances show clearly that the disciples, when permitted, recognized the very Jesus whom they had known. There is some uncertainty of physical recognition, but Mary knows the Lord who calls her by name; the two disciples recognize Him as He breaks the bread, and finally understand why their hearts burned within them by the way; the gathering company in the upper room are convinced that it is Jesus and no apparition; Thomas knows the Lord who appeals to his heart. Jesus Himself, as He speaks to one company and another, is insistent that it is He Himself, the same Friend, Teacher, Lord whom they had known so intimately through the months of discipleship.

Indeed, before the crucifixion, Jesus had spoken as confidently of His own continuous existence. On the last night He had said to His disciples, "Abide

in me, and I in you." He knew well that He was going away, yet spoke as one who should remain. There are no discourses of Jesus where the first personal pronoun occurs so frequently as in those of the upper room, showing clearly his consciousness of the persistence of personality through and in spite of the ordeal of death.

We are justified, therefore, in regarding the resurrection of Jesus and His manifestation to His disciples as a revelation of the continuance of the human spirit. Our Lord in no way separated Himself from us, but declared expressly, "Because I live, ye shall live also." And the apostolic argument was always that Jesus was "the first fruits of them that are asleep."—His life the promise of life for all believers.

When we confidently accept the resurrection of Jesus as a revelation of personal identity beyond the grave, many speculations are at once disposed of. The pantheistic theory of an absorption of the individual in the eternal infinite is disproved. Man is not a drop, isolated for a moment, mingling again with the ocean of being, losing his identity forever. He is a person forever. So, too, the curious fancy that the human spirit after death may appear in some animal or other human reincarnation is denied. The risen Christ was not a reincarnation. He said to His disciples, "It is I myself," and they knew Him and believed.

Of course, neither of these views has ever found much favor among Christians. But the notion has often been held that the human spirit would become a celestial being, a creature of another kind, something more or less than a man, perhaps an angel. But Jesus was Jesus, and He is still. Death and resurrection, changing wonderfully the conditions of his life, wrought no change upon that life itself. He was the same person.

It is an interesting question whether this fact of the persistence of personality is not contrary to the common view of the perfecting of the soul after death. Shall two Christians of immeasurably different moral attainment each become immediately perfect throught the simple process of passing through death? That would certainly minimize the importance of the moral struggle of this world, and would detract from the idea of real personality. If John the beloved and the thief on the cross are both perfect, (using the term in its full moral import) the moment death is passed, then character would be a creation instead of a moral achievement. To be sure, the perfectness of Jesus in His earthly life gave no opportunity for a moral transformation after death, but the fact that He was Himself and none other when He rose, may well make us believe that we shall be ourselves. We shall be purified indeed. The change from the earthly, material, physical conditions may well enable the spirit to live its best self, free from sin. But change of conditions does not make character. We have no right to expect a transformation that would make our personality unreal.

All that is at all
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops; potter and clay endure.

If each of us is to live on as surely as Jesus lives, then individual life must be of the highest significance. And if each of us is to live on as his real self, then all that enters into the making of personality is of supreme importance. Whittier said most justly, "Only personal qualities endure." He was speaking, perhaps, particularly of this life. It is true for the life that now is, and also for that which is to come. The fine hand cunning of the artisan or artist, the intellectual power of the scholar, the keenness and resourcefulness of the man of affairs, can last but a few decades. It seems pitiable that a man should strive so hard and that all should come to an end so soon. Pitiable indeed, if the man were only the artist, the scholar, the merchant!

But a man is more than his craft. The acquisition and employment of his powers of brain and hand have made a certain quality of man. It is that man, his personality and influence that abides. Jesus was a carpenter for many years, surely a good one, a faithful one; He was a student, earnest and thoughtful; He was a teacher; but He was more than all these. He was Jesus. He became the Jesus whom we know and love and worship through the carpentership and the studentship and the teachership. These were the means of developing obedience, faithfulness, truth, kindness, reverence, love. And these qualities of personality never die. The spirit never grows old. Goodness is never superseded. Love never faileth.

The Easter message is that we shall look through things to realities. Possessions and professions and material conditions are for the making of persons. They change and pass. Personality endures. The important consideration is "I," not "mine." Possessions may come, and I be the poorer, if they make me proud and selfish; or richer, if they make me noble, considerate and generous. Losses may come, and I be the richer, if I am strong, trustful and uncomplaining, with no bitterness, or I may be poor indeed if I lose my faith and hope and joy. So sickness may make me strong, and health unsympathetic, and therefore weak. "To them that love God, all things work together for good."

> He fixed thee 'mid this dance
> Of plastic circumstance,
> This Present thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest
> Machinery just meant
> To give thy soul its bent,
> Try thee and turn thee forth sufficiently impressed.

We shall not despise the present nor the things of the present. But we shall see that they are subservient to the great ends of personality. So, indeed, we shall use the present and all its blessed opportunities to the full, and we shall use all things for our joy and good, and for others. We shall not need to be morbidly thinking of the future, for we shall be finding every day the kingdom of God and his righteousness. When John Wesley was solemnly asked how he would live if that day were his last, he replied with healthy Christian common sense, that he would do exactly the duties that he had planned for the day. Jesus is risen, and therefore life is significant as a part of eternity. So Paul's magnificent resurrection argument finds its natural practical conclusion, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be yet steadfast, un-

movable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord."—*Sunday School Times.*

The editor of the *Juvenile Instructor* makes the following comment on the foregoing article:

It will perhaps seem strange to many of our young people that any Christian people in the world should question the continuance of our personality after the resurrection, in view of the appearance of Jesus as a person among His disciples, with whom He walked, talked, and ate. Yet it is held very generally among Christian believers that in the resurrection we shall be some sort of a spiritual entity quite different from our appearance in mortal life. In view of the direct and emphatic teaching of the New Testament, it is difficult to comprehend how Christians of the world generally can be so mystified on the subject. The article which is herewith copied advocates the continuance of our personality after the resurrection.

A distinction is drawn by the Christian sects between personality and individuality. Very many believe in the continuance of our individuality who disbelieve in our personality in the resurrection. That which they call individuality is by them termed the spiritual essence through which the body manifests itself, and they somehow or other have the notion that that spiritual essence may exist separate from the body.

Of course there is a spirit in man as the Latter-day Saints believe, but we believe that the spirit and the body combined are more exalted than the spirit alone, or, in other words, we believe that the body was intended by our Creator to be and is a help to the spirit, and not, as many of the Christians believe, a hindrance to it. We, therefore, exalt the body as well as the spirit, and we believe that both will be sanctified and made eternal and perfect through the power of God and our own faithfulness.

It is strange that Bible students should exalt individuality, meaning thereby the spirit and character of man, above his personality. As a matter of fact, that which they call individuality is merely an attribute of the person, and they could have no conception whatever of an individuality separate and apart from the person of man. It is the old, old story of substituting a part for the whole; and such errors will continue to exist as long as men deny the personality of God the Father. While they deny His personality, they generally admit that He has an individuality and draw the same distinctions between His personality and His individuality that they do between those of man after the resurrection. But this whole distinction is contrary to the plain lesson and teaching of Christ's personality after the resurrection.

It is assuring, however, to witness the gradual approach to the great fundamental principles of religious life taught by the Prophet Joseph. These changes point to a conversion in a general way of the Christian world where individual conversion to repentance and baptism and the acknowledgement of God's authority upon the earth is not yet observed. It is at least encouraging to see these notable changes in the theories of religion even though the men who advocate them undergo no changes of heart. The foregoing article will create wonderment in the minds of thousands of people throughout Christendom, while to the Latter-day Saints it will simply be a matter of course, the plain teaching of Holy Writ.

CURRENT COMMENT.

A Great Privilege.

At the Baptist World Congress held in London recently one of the speakers said: "The greatest privilege which a Baptist has is to remember his own baptism—but, alas! for members of other Churches, this can never be more than a matter of hearsay!"

The Last Chance.

Some years ago Phillips Brooks was recovering from an illness, and was denying himself to all visitors, when Robert Ingersoll called. The Bishop received him at once. "I appreciate this very much," said Mr. Ingersoll; "but why do you see me when you deny yourself to your friends?" "It is this way," said the Bishop, "I feel confident of seeing my friends in the next world, but you see this may be my last chance of seeing you."—*Northern Daily Telegraph.*

The Value of Little Things.

A holy life is made up of a number of small things; little words, not eloquent speeches or sermons; little deeds, not miracles of battle nor one great heroic act of mighty martyrdom, make up the true Christian life. The little constant sunbeam, not the lightning; the waters of Siloam that "go softly" in the meek mission of refreshment, not the "waters of the river, great and many," rushing down in noisy torrents, are the true symbols of a holy life. The avoidance of little evils, little sins, little inconsistencies, little weaknesses, little follies, indiscretions, and imprudences, little foibles, little indulgences of the flesh; the avoidance of such little things as these goes far to make up at least the negative beauty of a holy life.—Andrew A. Bonar.

Results of the Separation of Church and State.

The separation between State and Church in France has broken up 20,000 religious communities, and seems likely to result in the suppression of not less than 35,000 parishes. Thousands of pounds have been spent yearly in France for church furnishings, rosaries, statuary, etc. It is estimated that the changes inaugurated will deprive of employment nearly a quarter of a million persons, most of whom are trained artisans. This means that many other branches of trade will suffer in the withdrawal of the patronage and purchases of the Roman Catholic Church. Tradesmen, goldsmiths, jewellers, and workers in stone and metals have united in a petition to the French House of Deputies to investigate into the consequences of the action taken to divorce the State from the Church in view of the ruin to their business.—*Christian Age.*

The Doctrine of Revelation.

"The voice of God was as audible to Moses as any human voice," says Henry Proctor in the *Christian's Armoury.* "He continually speaks to Him as from a perpetual presence. So we read in Exodus xix: 3, 'God *called* to him out of the mountain,' and Moses went up into the mountain, into the thick